



From the Secretary of State

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Centro de Documentação

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 January 1985

Dear Miss Neville

Thank you for your letter of 15 January asking if I would raise the question of East Timor with the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Perez de Cuellar.

In the limited time available during my lunch with Mr Perez de Cuellar on 23 January there was no opportunity to discuss East Timor. But we have made our position clear on the annexation of East Timor and of developments there on many occasions in the United Nations and elsewhere. In doing so, we have said that the people of East Timor deserve the opportunity to determine their own future in accordance with their own political aspirations, unaffected by pressures of one kind or another. But the issue of East Timor can in our view, only be resolved by direct contact between Portugal and Indonesia. We have welcomed the efforts by the UN Secretary General to promote contacts between these two countries and further the prospects for a just settlement in accordance with the wishes and interests of the local people.

I understand your concern, and that of others, about the human rights situation in East Timor. You will have seen that Mr Perez de Cuellar in his Report on East Timor - published in July 1984 - emphasised that one of his primary

/concerns

Miss Mildred Neville MBE



concerns was to achieve an improvement of the humanitarian situation of the people there and that he would continue his endeavours towards that end.

We shall continue to watch the situation closely.

GEOFFREY HOWE

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Howe', with a horizontal line underneath. Above the signature are two separate, stylized horizontal strokes.